

I am writing to express my frustration with the state of Texas' attempt to justify a blanket renewal of its 1115 waiver, as expressed in the published STC 48 Transition Plan. The state of Texas, in its decision to forgo Medicaid expansion, has *no* long-term plan to reduce the level of uncompensated care that is currently straining hospital budgets and the healthcare safety net.

Texas argues that DSRIP projects are beneficial, although it maintains that it is "difficult to determine at this time the effectiveness of any one DSRIP project". This statement is extremely frustrating. Many DSRIP projects have brought much-needed money to support behavioral health, mental health, and substance use disorder treatment, among other needed healthcare improvement initiatives. However, many other DSRIP projects have demonstrated no improvement data, and in some cases, do not even have baseline year data to establish improvement in future years. These projects rely on anecdotal evidence of individual success stories, but produce scant evidence of Delivery System Reform or of payments reaching Texans in need. Many DSRIP projects have a goal of serving at least 20% uninsured or underinsured, but have few tracking mechanisms to ensure that these targets are being met.

It is also frustrating that the state, instead of taking proactive measures to insure more Texans, asks the federal government for additional Uncompensated Care funds. The "transition plan" notes that Texas remains the state with the highest rate of uninsured persons (22%), without mentioning that it is *precisely* the state's decision not to expand Medicaid that predetermines its enormous uninsured rate and uncompensated care burden.

The state of Texas concludes that "Texas' UC burden is increasing rather than decreasing, and the existing funding sources do not offset all UC costs for Medicaid and low-income uninsured patients." I certainly believe that the people at Texas' Health and Human Services Commission are doing the best that they can as the Commission is operating under unreasonable parameters established by the Texas State Legislature. However, I cannot move past cognitive dissonance of the Transition Plan, which says, "No, we will not expand Medicaid" and in the same breath demands that the federal government give Texas increased DSRIP, UC, and other funding streams to perpetuate its mismanagement of public health funds.

Please demand (better) data in the case of DSRIP projects, and threaten to discontinue funding for projects that do not produce actionable data in the near-future.

Please attach strings to the UC funds, which you must necessarily give to Texas to avoid catastrophe for indigent Texans in the short term, to ensure that the state improve its healthcare safety net. Please demand that the Transition Plan offer a valid roadmap to transition Texas towards a more stable healthcare safety net.